



September 28, 2004

Pair sentenced for crack, heroin trafficking

A federal judge has sentenced **Nill Ramos** and **Maria Velazquez**, both of Providence, to federal prison for trafficking in crack cocaine and heroin that Providence Police detectives seized from their New York Avenue apartment last October.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentences, which Chief U.S. District Court Judge Ernest C. Torres imposed on September 24 in U.S. District Court, Providence. Judge Torres sentenced Ramos, 29, to 76 months in prison and Velazquez, 25, to 70 months.

In July, both defendants pleaded guilty to four charges: two counts of conspiracy, possessing with intent to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, and possessing with intent to distribute more than 100 grams of heroin. At the plea hearings in July, Assistant U.S. Attorney Adi Goldstein said that the government had proof that, on October 24, 2003, detectives seized approximately seven ounces of heroin and about 4.3 ounces of crack from the first floor apartment at 194 New York Avenue and linked the drugs to Velazquez and Ramos.

The seizure followed a month-long investigation by the **Narcotics and Organized Crime Bureau** into suspected drug trafficking by both Ramos and Velazquez.

Executing a state-authorized warrant, detectives found Velazquez standing next to a kitchen table on which they found most of the drugs – a plastic bag containing 17 “knuckles” (packages not yet cut for distribution) of heroin, weighing a total of 190.4 grams, a

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plastic bag containing another 5.5 grams of heroin, and two plastic bags containing a total of 123.1 grams of crack cocaine. Detectives seized \$1,458 in cash from Velazquez.

Detectives found Ramos in the living room of the apartment with his wife and two infant children. They arrested Ramos and Velazquez, both of whom admitted that they intended to sell the drugs. Velazquez said she had been staying at 194 New York Avenue and that she and Ramos had been dealing drugs together for several months. BCI detectives later matched latent fingerprints found on the drug packages to Ramos' prints.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Goldstein prosecuted the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephen G. Dambruch represented the government at the sentencing. The Drug Enforcement Administration provided assistance in the investigation.

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